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The SPECTATOR.

Hic gelidi fontes, hic mollia prata, Lycori,
Hic Nemus, hic toto tecum conſumerer ævo. Virg.

MONDAY, *Auguſt* 23. 1714.

HILPA was one of the 150 Daughters of *Zilpah*, of the Race of *Cohu*, by whom ſome of the Learned think is meant *Cain*. She was exceedingly beautiful, and when ſhe was but a Girl of threeſcore and ten Years of Age, received the Addreſſes of ſeveral who made Love to her. Among theſe were two Brothers, *Harpath* and *Shalum*; *Harpath*, being the Firſt-born, was Maſter of that fruitful Region which lies at the Foot of Mount *Tirzah*, in the Southern Parts of *China*. *Shalum* (which is to ſay the Planter, in the *Chineſe* Language) poſſeſſed all the neighbouring Hills, and that great Range of Mountains which goes under the Name of *Tirzah*. *Harpath* was of a haughty contemptuous Spirit; *Shalum* was of a gentle Diſpoſition, beloved both by God and Man.

It is ſaid that, among the Antediluvian Women, the Daughters of *Cohu* had their Minds wholly ſet upon Riches; for which Reaſon the beautiful *Hilpa* preferred *Harpath* to *Shalum*, becauſe of his numerous Flocks and Herds, that covered all the low Country which runs along the Foot of Mount *Tirzah*, and is watered by ſeveral Fountains and Streams breaking out of the Sides of that Mountain.

Harpath made ſo quick a Diſpatch in his Courtſhip, that he married *Hilpa* in the hundredth Year of her Age; and being of an inſolent Temper, laughed to Scorn his Brother *Shalum* for having pretended to the beautiful *Hilpa*, when he was Maſter of nothing but a long Chain of Rocks and Mountains. This ſo much provoked *Shalum*, that he is ſaid to have curſed his Brother in the Bitterneſs of his Heart, and to have pray'd that one of his Mountains might fall upon his Head, if ever he came within the Shadow of it.

From this Time forward *Harpath* would never venture out of the Vallies, but came to an untimely End in the 250th Year of his Age, being drowned in a River as he attempted to croſs it. This River is called to this Day, from his Name who periſhed in it, the River *Harpath*; and, what is very remarkable, iſſues out of one of thoſe Mountains which *Shalum* wiſhed might fall upon his Brother, when he curſed him in the Bitterneſs of his Heart.

Hilpa was in the 160th Year of her Age at the Death of her Husband, having brought him but 50 Children, before he was ſnatched away as has been already related. Many of the Antediluvians made Love to the young Widow, tho' no one was thought ſo likely to ſucceed in her Affections as her firſt Lover *Shalum*, who renew'd his Court to her about ten Years after the Death of *Harpath*; for it was not thought decent in thoſe Days, that a Widow ſhould be ſeen by a Man within ten Years after the Deceaſe of her Husband.

Shalum falling into a deep Melancholy, and reſolving to take away that Objection which had been raiſed againſt him when he made his firſt Addreſſes

dreſſes to *Hilpa*, began immediately after her Marriage with *Harpath*, to plant all that mountainous Region which fell to his Lot in the Diviſion of this Country. He knew how to adapt every Plant to its proper Soil, and is thought to have inherited many traditional Secrets of that Art from the firſt Man. This Employment turned at length to his Profit as well as to his Amuſement: His Mountains were in a few Years ſhaded with young Trees, that gradually ſhot up into Groves, Woods, and Foreſts, intermix'd with Walks, and Launs, and Gardens; inſomuch that the whole Region, from a naked and deſolate Proſpect, began now to look like a ſecond Paradiſe. The Pleaſantneſs of the Place, and the agreeable Diſpoſition of *Shalum*, who was reckoned one of the mildeſt and wiſeſt of all who lived before the Flood, drew into it Multitudes of People, who were perpetually employed in the ſinking of Wells, the digging of Trenches, and the hollowing of Trees, for the better Diſtribution of Water through every Part of this ſpacious Plantation.

The Habitations of *Shalum* looked every Year more beautiful in the Eyes of *Hilpa*, who, after the ſpace of 70 Autumns, was wonderfully pleaſed with the diſtant Proſpect of *Shalum*'s Hills, which were then covered with innumerable Tufts of Trees and gloomy Scenes that gave a Magnificence to the Place, and converted it into one of the fineſt Landskips the Eye of Man could behold.

The *Chineſe* record a Letter which *Shalum* is ſaid to have written to *Hilpa*, in the eleventh Year of her Widow-hood. I ſhall here tranſlate it, without departing from that noble Simplicity of Sentiments, and Plainneſs of Manners, which appears in the Original.

Shalum was at this time 180 Years old, and *Hilpa* 170.

Shalum, *Maſter of Mount* Tirzah, *to* Hilpa, *Miſtreſs of the Vallies.*

In the 788th Year of the Creation.

'WHAT have I not ſuffered, O thou Daughter of *Zilpah*, ſince thou gaveſt thy ſelf away in Marriage to my Rival? I grew weary of the Light of the Sun, and have been ever ſince covering my ſelf with Woods and Foreſts. Theſe threeſcore and ten Years have I bewailed the Loſs of thee on the Tops of Mount *Tirzah*, and ſoothed my Melancholy among a thouſand gloomy Shades of my own raiſing. My Dwellings are at preſent as the Garden of God; every Part of them is filled with Fruits, and Flowers, and Fountains. The whole Mountain is perfumed for thy Reception. Come up into it, O my Beloved, and let us People this Spot of the new World with a beautiful Race of Mortals; let us multiply exceedingly among theſe delightful Shades, and fill every Quarter of them with Sons and Daughters. Remember, O thou Daughter of *Zilpah*, that the Age of Man is but a thouſand Years; that Beauty is the Admiration but of a few Centuries. It flouriſhes as a Mountain Oak, or as a Cedar on the Top of *Tirzah*, which in three or four hundred Years will fade away, and never be thought of by Poſterity, unleſs a young Wood ſprings from its Roots. Think well on this, and remember thy Neighbour in the Mountains.

Having here inſerted this Letter, which I look upon as the only Antediluvian *Billet-doux* now extant, I ſhall in my next Paper give the Anſwer to it, and the Sequel of this Story.

ADVERTISEMENTS.

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